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Dr. Phan Quang Dan

Saigon 419 9-5-67

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4939

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

LIMDIS

1. LMBOFF CALLED ON DR. PHAN QUANG DAN AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 5. DAN WAS IN EXCELLENT SPIRITS AND HIS USUAL WITTY, OPTIMISTIC SELF. HE SAID HE WAS PLANNING TO TAKE A WEEK OR SO OFF IN VUNG TAU OR DALAT IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

2. DAN BEGAN BY SAYING HE THOUGHT ELECTION HAD BEEN VERY FREE. THERE HAD BEEN SOME INSTANCES OF RIGGING, MOST NOTABLY IN GIA DINH, BUT DAN WAS SURE THAT THIS WAS AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE PROVINCE CHIEF AND NOT ON ORDERS FROM THIEU OR KY. ELECTION FRAUD, DAN CONCLUDED, HAD BEEN INSIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN THIEU/

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KY VICTORY AND HE STRONGLY DOUBTED THAT HUONG OR DZU COULD HAVE CONDUCTED SUCH AN HONEST ELECTION HAD THEY BEEN IN POWER.

3. DAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE DID NOT PLAN TO TAKE PART IN ANY ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT ELECTION. SUU, HA THUC KY, HUONG AND

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DZU, ON THE OTHER HAND, PLANNING TO PROTEST RESULTS AND HOPE TO GET NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO DECLARE ELECTION INVALID. DANGER EXISTS THAT DEPUTIES IN ASSEMBLY LOYAL TO THESE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES MIGHT MUSTER ENOUGH VOTES TO SERIOUSLY DISCREDIT ELECTION EVEN IF THEY DON'T SUCCEED IN GETTING IT DECLARED INVALID. DAN SAID THROWING OUT THIS ELECTION WOULD BE SENSELESS, UNJUSTIFIABLE AND DISASTROUS ACT. HE URGED THAT WE USE WHATEVER INFLUENCE WE HAVE WITH NA DEPUTIES TO ASSURE THAT THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN.

4. EMBOFF ASKED DAN WHY SUU, WHO HAS PLAYED SUCH CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE DURING PAST YEAR, WOULD ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH ATTEMPT TO CREATE POLITICAL CHAOS. DAN REPLIED THAT SUU IS OLD, SENILE AND AT TIMES HYSTERICAL. DAN RECOUNTED STORY OF MORNING OF ELECTION DAY WHEN SUU CALLED HIM TO SAY THAT THU DUC DISTRICT CHIEF IN GIA DINH HAD PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED WITHDRAWAL OF SUU FROM PRESIDENTIAL RACE AND REMOVED SUU BALLOTS FROM ALL POLLING PLACES.

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DAN RUSHED TO THU DUC, VISITED SEVERAL POLLING AREAS AS WELL AS THE DISTRICT CHIEF AND FOUND EVERYTHING IN ORDER. SUU, DAN SAID, HAD SIMPLY OVERREACTED TO A WILD RUMOR AS IS HIS WONT. (THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION DAN WAS NOT PARTICULARLY CHARITABLE TOWARDS SUU AND ONE POINT CLAIMED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE DONE MUCH BETTER IF ORDER OF THE SLATE HAD BEEN REVERSED.)

5. DAN THEN GAVE HIS ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION RESULTS. HE SAID HE HAD KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT THIEU AND KY WERE INEVITABLE WINNERS. HOW COULD THEY LOSE WITH GOVERNMENT MACHINERY AT THEIR DISPOSAL AND 10 CIVILIAN OPPONENTS. DZU'S STRONG SHOWING NOT ALL THAT SURPRISING. THERE HAD BEEN ONLY TWO SLATES WITH UNIQUE PLATFORMS ON ISSUE OF WAR AND PEACE. ONE WAS PHAM HUY CO WHO ADVOCATED VICTORY AT ANY COST EVEN IF IT MEANT STATIONING 5 MILLION US TROOPS IN SVN. THE OTHER WAS DZU WHO ADVOCATED PEACE AT ANY PRICE. COS I SITION PROVED TO BE VERY UNPOPULAR AND HE GOT ONLY 1 PER CENT OF VOTE. DZU'S PLATFORM ON THE OTHER HAND WAS ONLY ONE ACCEPTABLE TO THE VIET CONG. THUS, DAN CLAIMED, VC DECIDED TO THROW WEIGHT BEHIND DZU AND AT THE LAST MINUTE PUT OUT THE WORD TO PEOPLE LIVING UNDER THEIR

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INFLUENCE. ALL ONE HAS TO DO IS LOOK AT THE AREAS WHERE DZU

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POLLED WELL, DAN MAINTAINED, TO CONFIRM THAT HE BENEFITTED FROM THE VC. "KIEN PHONG, CAMAU, TAY NINH, HAU NGHIA, WHY IN SOME OF THESE PROVINCES DZU DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A CAMPAIGN APPARATUS", DAN EXCLAIMED.

6. DAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT DZU'S VOTE IN FACT VERY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT. ASSUMING THAT OF THE 17 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE DZU RECEIVED, 2 PER CENT WAS TAN DAI VIET, THEN 15 PER CENT WAS VIET CONG. "THIS IS REALLY A GOOD SIGN", DAN ADDED, "AND PROVES THE VC REALLY DON'T HAVE MUCH POPULAR SUPPORT. THEY ARE WELL ORGANIZEDWNQ YES, BUT IF WE NATIONALISTS CLOSE RANKS WE COULD DEFEAT THEM EASILY." ELABORATING FURTHER ON HIS THEORY THAT VC VOTE WENT FOR DZU, DAN CLAIMED FACT THAT I CORPS BUDDHIST VOTE WENT FOR SUU WAS PROOF THAT BUDDHISTS NOT COMMUNISTS.

7. COMMENTING FURTHER ON ELECTION RESULTS, DAN SAID HE WAS HAPPY HUONG HAD BEEN BEATEN "BECAUSE HE IS A REAL REGIONALIST"; AND DAN WAS EVEN HAPPIER THAT POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRIME MINISTER KY WILL BE REDUCED. KY IS BRASH AND IRRESPONSIBLE, DAN SAID, WHILE THIEU IS REFLECTIVE, RESERVED AND POLITE. DAN PRAISED THEIU'S BEHAVIOR DURING THE CAMPAIGN, SAID HE HAD TAKEN CRITICISM WELL AND NOT ONCE HAD THIEU ENGAGED IN ANY MUD SLIGNING.

8. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, DAN EXPRESSED GREAT HOPES FOR THE

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NEW, CONSTITUTIONALLY, ELECTED GOVERNMENT. DAN SAID HE WOULD WORK WITH THEIU AND MENTIONED SEVERAL OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS WHOM HE THOUGHT WOULD BE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH NEW-GOVERNMENT, AMONG THEM HA THUC KY AND NGUYEN VAN TRUONG. AS FOR SUU AND HUONG, THEIR POLITICAL CAREERS ARE FINISHED AND "WE SHOULD PUT THEM IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM TOGETHER WITH TRAN VAN LY, NGUYEN HOA HIEP AND VU HONG KHANH." ON NO ACCOUNT, DAN

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INSISTED, SHOULD DZU BE INVITED INTO GOVERNMENT. INSTEAD, DAN SUGGESTED, DZU SHOULD JUST BE ALLOWED TO DISCREDIT HIMSELF, SOMETHING HE'S SURE TO DO IF ALLOWED ENOUGH TIME.

9. DAN SAID HE DOUBTED THAT EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT ELECTION WOULD REALLY SUCCEED AND HE WAS EQUALLY SKEPTICAL THAT BUDDHISTS WOULD TRY TO LAUNCH ANY PROTEST DEMONSTRATIONS. AFTER ALL, DAN POINTED OUT, AT LEAST TWO OF THE UPPER HOUSE SLATES THEY FAVORED ARE LIKELY TO BE ELECTED (LIST 10 HEADED BY PHAM BA CAM AND LIST 13 HEADED BY TRAN VAN DON) AND THUS THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE THEIR INFLUENCE FELT IN PEACEFUL, CONSTRUCTIVE WAY. DAN CONCLUDED ON A CAUTIOUS NOTE OBSERVING THAT, DESPITE HIS OWN PERSONAL OPTIMISM AND GOOD WILL, THE COURSE OF EVENTS DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS DEPENDS LARGELY ON THE WAY THIEU HIMSELF DECIDES TO PLAY HIS CARDS.

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10. COMMENT: (A) WE BELIEVE DAN'S ATTITUDE VERY HELPFUL AND WHILE HE SEEMS TO BE ANGLING FOR A POSITION IN FUTURE GOVERNMENT, HIS REMARKS APPEAR TO REFLECT SINCERE BELIEF THAT ELECTION WAS ON THE WHOLE HONEST.

(B) WE AGREE WITH DAN THAT SOME DANGER EXISTS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL ATTEMPT TO ANKUL ELECTION. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH NA DEPUTIES WE PLAN TO POINT OUT THAT ANY RASH MOVES ON NA'S PART OR EXCESSIVE EMPHASIS ON MINOR INSTANCES OF FRAUD COULD HAVE VERY DAMAGING CONSEQUENCES FOR COUNTRY'S FUTURE. WE WILL ALSO EXPLAIN THAT WE OF COURSE RECOGNIZE LEGITIMATE COMPLAINTS SHOULD BE AIRED IN ASSEMBLY DEBATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ELECTION LAW.

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